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FOR NEA/ELA AND NEA/IPA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/04/2019
TAGS: [KPAL](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [EG](#) [IS](#)
SUBJECT: EGYPT: GAZA ROUND-UP: JANUARY 6

REF: A. CAIRO 0017
[1](#)B. CAIRO 0007
[1](#)C. CAIRO 0003
[1](#)D. CAIRO 0002

Classified By: Minister Counselor William R. Stewart
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

Rafah

[1](#)1. (S/NF) The Egyptian military reports Egyptian security forces are controlling the Egypt/Gaza border. Egypt delivered humanitarian aid through the Rafah and al-Aouja crossing points. 18 Palestinian casualties entered Egypt yesterday for medical treatment. IDF ground forces are reportedly operating in the border area between Rafah and Karem Shalom. Egyptian officials report seeing Israeli tanks, APCs, and bulldozers on the Gaza side of the border. Egypt does not believe any tunnel smuggling activities are ongoing at this time.

Demonstrations

[1](#)2. (SBU) Contacts report a demonstration January 6 of 4,000 protestors from a variety of opposition political parties in Kafr Al-Dawar in the Nile Delta. Contacts have also told us of smaller protests January 6 in Fayoum (about 100 km. south of Cairo) at the Wafd party headquarters there (ca. 400 people); in Assiut (in Middle Egypt) organized by the Coptic Church; and in Aswan (in Upper Egypt) at the Engineers' Syndicate. We are not aware of any demonstrations January 6 in Cairo.

[1](#)3. (SBU) The Hisham Mubarak Center, a legal advocacy NGO, submitted a request to the public prosecutor to investigate police beatings of journalists at pro-Gaza demonstrations December 31. The Arab Organization for Human Rights issued a statement expressing concern over the GOE detentions of demonstrators and calling for their release. On January 5, one prominent blogger discussed the urgent need for medical supplies in Gaza hospitals. On January 7, a self-described "pro-U.S." Egyptian blogger living abroad mocked those who criticize the Egyptian government for not being able to end the current crisis immediately.

[1](#)4. (SBU) On January 5, 36 Muslim Brotherhood members were reportedly arrested in the Delta governorate of Dakhaleya, while protesting about Gaza. Forty Egyptian Muslim preachers and scholars (including a former Grand Mufti) have signed a statement calling for a "jihad to liberate Palestine.⁸ The Egypt-based Arab Doctors' Union plans to hold a meeting in Rafah on January 7 of the chairmen of the doctor,s syndicates in various Arab countries. The Arab Doctors' Union, which is led by a prominent MB member, plans to

organize a convoy to Gaza with medical supplies and doctors from various Arab countries. Separately, 70 Egyptian doctors have petitioned the Minister of Health to allow them to go to Gaza to assist Palestinian doctors. Qatar-based Egyptian Sheikh Yousef Qaradawi has declared Friday, January 9, to be an "International Day to Support Gaza, and a Day of Anger.⁸ He called on imams and preachers worldwide to deliver sermons in support of Gaza, and to pray for the martyrs and victims.

SCOBAY